



DRAFT TWINBROOK NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

COMMENTS RECEIVED AT APRIL 29, 2007 OPEN HOUSE

Residential Areas:

- Limit by conservation?
- One rule fits all?
- Make Twinbrook historic?
- Retain or remove?

Commercial and Industrial Areas:

- **Twinbrook Shopping Center:**
 - Downzone?
 - To keep what exists - buildings, better stores
 - Provide for mixed-use?
 - How to define uses and form?
 - Hardware store
 - Should add more residential?
 - Help Twinbrook get fair share of resources.

Lewis Avenue/Halpine industrial area:

- Mixed use?
- Retain? Floating zone – where apply?

Provide analysis on zoning implications:

- Infrastructure
- Impact of Twinbrook Station on neighborhood?

Transportation impact?





DRAFT TWINBROOK NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

COMMENTS RECEIVED AT MAY 15, 2007 OPEN HOUSE

Residential Areas:

- Are there plans to downzone residential areas?
- Mansionization concerns may not be uniform in different parts of the City.
- Bought small house and want to keep it, but neighbors can block the sun.
- Plan has no changes to residential concepts that overlap to RORZOR.
- Twinbrook Plan and RORZOR do interact. Focus on neighborhood feeling but practical to talk about borrowing.
- What tools are available?
- More streetlights.
- RORZOR suggests that 30% of neighborhood agree to Conservation District, but it's 100% for a change in an HOA.
- Downzoning would affect home equity and ability to borrow against home.
- RORZOR recommending up to .4 FAR for residential.
- What is Mixed Residential?

Staff Comments

- *RORZOR is a re-write of the City's zoning ordinance that is ongoing. More information may be found at:
<http://www.rockvillemd.gov/zoning/index.html>*
- *Mixed residential is a mix of single family, townhomes and apartments. No commercial. Would include MPDUs – affordable housing.*
- *The Draft Plan recommends that request for Conservation District come from neighborhood. Each District is unique.*

Commercial and Industrial Areas:

- How will redevelopment affect property values?
- No floating zones.
- More streetlights.
- Provide analysis on zoning implications.
- Concerned about density with residential.
- Lot of information – only interested in ratio of current to plan.





- If it will be 20 years, what day will we see the first change? Where will it occur? When is the County change to start?
- [Don't] remove library or parking.

Staff Comments

- *The draft plan recommends no change to the Twinbrook Library, which is a County-owned facility.*

Twinbrook Shopping Center/Twinbrook Mart Area:

- Why is the Plan changing the zoning of the Twinbrook Shopping Center?
- What is "downzoning"?
- Don't see that downzoning would be a legal problem for the developer/owner.
- The owner doesn't want to change.
- The owner has not changed in 40 years and will not.
- The next generation of owners may want to change.
- The Twinbrook Shopping Center and the Twinbrook Mart should not be more than 35 feet high.
- We may not want all of the uses currently allowed in the C-2 zone.
- If we go with the height and density recommended in the Plan the ground will be broken tomorrow.
- What about building condos on top of the library, CVS or other stores?
- Mixed use funding? Article in Washington Post about local governments subsidizing mixed use.
- Prefer no development.
- Mix of uses creates identity.
- Projected timeframe for changes to Twinbrook Safeway area?
- Since my house backs to the side of the Safeway, what will the changes do to my property value?
- Will anyone provide a better fence – when Safeway expanded their parking lot they planted bushes – Rockville wouldn't do anything to provide a fence – so most of us built our own..
- What are the benefits of extending Atlantic Avenue?
- "Smart Growth" – but no intelligent growth
- King Farm in Twinbrook?
- Need more commercial, no residential, better access for cars and people.
- Pedestrian crossings on Veirs Mill Road – over and underpass.
- No nightclubs or bars in Twinbrook Shopping Centers.





- Parking issues – employee parking too. Make parking easy.
- How many stores survive 20 years?
- Don't want parking structure. Too dense already.
- Forget 20 years, what about 5 – 10 years?
- Will the developer pay for it?
- Like to know about pedestrian access if do mixed use, pedestrian safety and walkability.
- Drop to 35 feet high now, with the last 5 feet roof.
- The City controls zoning.
- What are the alternatives for Twinbrook Shopping Center and Twinbrook Mart?
- How close to Veirs Mill Road could the buildings be?
- Shopping Centers on Veirs Mill to be pedestrian friendly.
- Have there been any direct conversations with the owners of Twinbrook Shopping Center and Twinbrook Mart about their plans for future development?
- What I want at Twinbrook Center/Mart:
 - 1 level (ground) of stores, restaurants, bars, nightclubs etc.
 - 1 level (above) of offices (dentists, insurance agents, etc.)
 - 1 level (top) of condos/apartments.

Staff Comments

- *FAR = Floor Area Ratio*
- *Residential is not allowed under the existing commercial zoning. Retail and/or office allowed.*
- *Owner could build an office building like the one on the Pike at Edmonston Crossing, or the "pink" building, by right.*
- *The Draft Plan recommends reducing what's allowable at Twinbrook shopping center from an all commercial development that can go up to 75 feet tall, to mixed-use that can go to a maximum of 65 feet tall.*
- *Mixed use is a mix of shops, offices and residences.*
- *The height of new development would have to taper 35 feet next to single family homes.*
- *Parking requirements are based on use:*

For multi-family (apartments or condos):

<i>Studio</i>	<i>= 1.0</i>
<i>1 Bedroom</i>	<i>= 1.25</i>





2 or more Bedrooms = 1.50

For townhouses:

1 or 2 Bedrooms = 1.50

3 or more Bedrooms = 2.0

Lewis Avenue/Halpine industrial area:

- Height and compatibility of redevelopment at Lewis and Halpine an issue.
- The Twinbrook Station development is scaled down at the edge to be compatible with the existing townhomes.

Transportation Questions:

- Transportation impact?
- Need to consider the traffic impact of the new development.
- Pedestrian crossings on Veirs Mill Road – under and overpass.
- Has Metro enough capacity? Every Metro stop is scheduled to have high density. More density seen along Rockville Pike too.
- There are parking problems in King Farm – concerned about parking in the Twinbrook neighborhood.
- Not safe to walk along Veirs Mill Road.
- Too much traffic through the neighborhood.
- Too many parked cars in the neighborhood.
- How is gridlock being addressed? Too many more cars on the roads. Evening rush hour takes 15 minutes to go from Broadwood to Library on Veirs Mill.

Environmental Questions:

- Stormwater problems.
- Wildlife problems.
- Deer, safety at night.

General Comments:

- Ageing population in Twinbrook. Cater to them with benches, trees, and walkable places.





- It will encourage more cars on the street, even if near Metro.
- Where is the market headed?
- The City just wants to make money off the mixed use. They're yuppifying everything.
- Condos recently built are empty.
- What about the condos at Barnes and Nobles? *(They're outside the City.)*
- Who is going to pay for implementing the Plan?
- Will our taxes increase?
- No one on Plan Advisory Group was in favor of dense development.
Don't let the perfect get in the way of the good.
- Need input on other topics in Plan at next meeting.





DRAFT TWINBROOK NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

COMMENTS RECEIVED AT MAY 31, 2007 OPEN HOUSE

Residential Areas:

- Houses allowed to be built too big, e.g. Lithicum and Twinbrook Parkway. It devalues the entire neighborhood.
- Confusion about burned-out house on McAuliffe: *(on market for \$300,000, it will cost \$300,000 to build a new house, owners want profit of \$100,000, but can't sell a home for \$700,000 in Twinbrook.)*
- House on McAuliffe – what do you want to see done? *(Asked City to condemn so not look at burned out house.)*
- *(On Conservation or Overlay zones)* How does this affect the equity in the neighborhood?
- Don't buy argument that equity will be affected. Market will not want to pay high energy rates. Individuals can decide to reduce energy and that can make a difference.
- Demographics changing – large groups of young adults and multiple families living in one house; is this a trend?
- Single family living in single family house is dwindling.
- RORZOR – 30% property owners need to approve for a conservation plan.
- Put in recommendation for 100% instead of 30% for Conservation District approval.
- Want conservation district option to preserve character of smaller communities where houses are similar.
- Do not reduce the extent to which existing homes can be built out. Leave the current square-foot limitations; do not reduce these limits!
- Would like the option of a carport.
- Make sure that the new units have a large contingent of low-income housing. And housing with enough bedrooms for a family.
- Restrict Section 8 housing/"dormitory" housing. Transient house is terrible for family neighborhoods.
- If sites redevelop – only single-family homes – roads are too crowded and we need to preserve our neighborhood – not separate it into sections (i.e. Broome Middle School and area churches.)





Advisory Group comment:

- *Draft Plan recommends Conservation District should be citizen driven, not City initiated.*

Staff comment:

- *R-60 = lot size of not less than 6,000 square feet, although there are a number of undersized lots (around 5,000 square feet) in the area.*

Commercial and Industrial Areas:

Twinbrook Shopping Center/Twinbrook Mart Area:

- No mixed use on Veirs Mill Road, only create more traffic.
- Beautify shopping center.
- Need better crosswalks on Veirs Mill Road.
- Do not like King Farm design for mixed use example.
- Would like mixed use on Veirs Mill Road if designed right.
- No mixed use – would only see Starbucks – remain commercial, like Safeway. Want hardware store.
- Do want mixed use – if people live above it creates a demand for services, helps the businesses.
- Want mixed use – concerned about the abandonment of space.
- Does the City take into consideration the cost of City services? e.g. fire cost, tax assessment.
- Important to point out that the new proposal for Twinbrook Shopping Center is not for seven times as high as what's there now.
- Concern about filthy sidewalks within shopping centers – gum etc.
- Better pedestrian access to community points of interest, particularly Veirs Mill Shopping centers.
- If the Twinbrook Shopping Center redevelops, could the Library be an anchor? Need safer pedestrian access.
- Impact of construction on the library and patterns of use could be a concern.
- Residential over commercial. No, not filling the Town Centers yet, why build more now.
- What do we have to do to get something like a hardware store?
- Don't want more density.





- No mixed use. Not enough parking room in Twinbrook Shopping center for more businesses.
- In the Twinbrook Center, I'd like to see: (a) grocery store (b) auto-repair shop (c) drug store (d) restaurants and nightclubs (e) day care center (f) Library. With dwellings above these – around 55 feet high.
- Lower height of Twinbrook Shopping Center to 35 feet maximum.
- King Farm Shopping Center cannot apply to Twinbrook Shopping Center. The most problems been facing in King Farm Shopping Center – Parking. Don't be surprised there are 4 banks in King Farm Shopping Center within 300 feet.
- Town Center of City of Rockville can't apply to Twinbrook either, because we are Twinbrook Shopping Center, we are unique.
- Do owners of area have to sign off on recommendations? *(No, would abide by zoning changes made, if any.)*

Advisory Group comments:

- *Twinbrook Shopping Center and Twinbrook Mart are now zoned C-2; the owner could build a 75 foot high building right now. The Draft Plan proposes 65 feet high at Veirs Mill Road, stepping down to 35 feet next to (or across from) the single-family homes.*
- *Twinbrook Shopping Center is approximately 18 feet high, Safeway higher.*
- *Condo market up and down – in cycles. Remember this is a 20 – 25 year plan. Eastern Rockville not getting as high of quality development as the rest of the City – don't want to freeze anything.*
- *Any commercial development will take time to build out – e.g. JBG says Twinbrook Station will take 8 years to build out. Who knows when the area will develop?*
- *This is a draft, nothing in concrete. Floating zone etc. suggested as a tool, if it is available.*

Burgundy Shopping Center

- Beautify shopping center.
- What tools and techniques to improve Burgundy?





Staff comments:

City should establish relationship with owner to encourage improvement; City sponsored programs (e.g. façade improvement, landscaping, streetscapes etc.)

Lewis Avenue/Halpine industrial area:

- No mixed use on Halpine and Twinbrook Parkway or Lewis Avenue.
- No more traffic on corner at Halpine and Lewis.
- Want to see residential at Lewis, not industrial.
- Would like mixed use as a better noise barrier from tracks – could live above their store.
- Want residential at Lewis.
- Important to have zone that includes uses in Lewis Avenue (industrial) condos. Should be built to block sound, like businesses to remain, hear from everyone, not just Lewis.
- Sound can travel from the railroad.
- Cafes and restaurants would be great in the Lewis area, could walk there.
- Lewis Avenue very different from Halpine/Ardenes: Avalonbay proposing to be a buffer between single family homes and proposed multi-story office building.
- Promote smart growth by allowing high density residential mixed use near the Metro Station. This is particularly important in the current Halpine Road industrial area.
- Break out the Ardenes industrial area away from the Lewis Avenue area. They are both very different areas in use and feel.

Transportation Questions:

- Lewis and Edmonston big traffic problems.
- At Veirs Mill Road, no left turn on Edmonston.
- Cut-through traffic in neighborhood a concern.
- Need more stop signs in neighborhood.
- No mixed use on Veirs Mill Road – only create more traffic.
- Need better crosswalks on Veirs Mill Road.
- Need enforcement for use of cross-walks by pedestrians.
- Need overpass on Twinbrook Parkway to apartments for pedestrians.
- Safety a concern in bus stop areas on Twinbrook Parkway.





- No more traffic on corner at Halpine and Lewis.
- Concerns about pedestrian safety on Veirs Mill Road.
- Pedestrian safety important at access points.
- Need turning land at First Street and Baltimore Road.
- Improve crosswalks.
- In 1981 the Twinbrook Parkway was so dark after 6:00 p.m. Today still the same. NIH and 5600 Fishers Lane (Parklawn area) too.
- I have passed by Veirs Mill Road since 1981, at that time I lived in Wheaton, today I live in City of Rockville. I'm still passing by Veirs Mill Road, the Twinbrook Shopping Center, still 4 lanes, but volume of vehicle has increased more than twice (at least). What will happen 20 years later, the Twinbrook still four lanes of traffic in front of the Twinbrook Shopping Center. Volume of traffic should be apply to Twinbrook Shopping Center. We should study some shopping center in Rt. 355.

Environmental Questions:

- Need environmentally conscious practices.
- Stormwater management with new development.
- Preserve tributaries and streams.
- Look at LEED practices.
- If stormwater management is at Glenview it's too late, the problem will be out of the City.
- Ponds becoming larger (bigger and bigger)
- Solar power.
- Rock Creek rated in poor condition. Way we build affects our environment. Decide whether to contribute to streams, creeks or not – tax dollars paid to these funds (stream clean up etc.)
- Concern about water run off with lots of paving.

General Comments:

- Focused a lot on negatives of Plan but there is a lot of good things in this Plan too.
- Montgomery County should contribute money for Twinbrook Community Center for Montgomery County residents that use center.
- Page 41 – not comfortable with floating zone.





- All references to Floating Zones need to come out due to RORZOR decision?
- Critical of staff worksheet – too “world peace” like. They want more specific comments/feedback.
- No floating zones.
- No mixed use.
- Wintergreen Shopping Center been there more than 24 years before I immigrated to Montgomery County. The problem for this shopping center is parking problems. During these years, I don't know how many owner of shop still the original owner?

